

Washington, DC-Today, the U.S. House of Representatives progressed on its agenda for the First 100 Hours by passing HR. 2, The Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007. Passage of this bill marks a critical first step to increasing the Federal Minimum Wage for the first time in a decade.

Once enacted into law, the minimum wage will increase incrementally from the current \$5.15 per hour to \$7.25 per hour over a period of two years. The bill received broad bi-partisan support, passing by a vote of 315 to 116. The bill is expected to directly affect the wages of up to 13 million Americans. Among them will be up to 658,000 Texans, according to the Center for Economic and Policy Research.

Congressman Charles Gonzalez issued the following statement on the passage of The Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007:

"American working men and women have been waiting ten years for a much deserved pay raise. I am proud that the Democratic Party is keeping its promise to the American people and supporting legislation that will improve the lives of thousands of families in Texas and across the country.

Over the past decade, we have seen the cost of healthcare, education, utilities, rent, gasoline, and food skyrocket. But the minimum wage has not kept pace. This situation has left many working families struggling just to get by. Because past congresses have failed to act and increase the minimum wage, it has become a poverty wage. Today, Democrats took a step toward correcting this injustice.

The voters of this country demanded change last November, and after ten long years of inaction on this issue, they are getting change for the better."